

# Sea exploration center proposed for Fun Zone site

The Newport Harbor museum plan calls for a \$40-million facility near Balboa Pavilion.

MIKE REICHER

A prime piece of waterfront next to the historic Balboa Pavilion would be transformed into a sprawling \$40-million ocean exploration center under a plan proposed by the Newport Harbor Nautical Museum.

The ocean-themed complex would all but erase the kitschy 1930s-era Fun Zone from the Balboa landscape, replacing it with a three-story glass and metal structure that would include submarine simulators and a 4-D theater, the fourth dimension being the salt mist that would be pumped into the room for the full effect.

"It's something that takes a little time to grasp," said Tom Pollack, chairman of the ExplorOcean board of trustees.

The plan for ExplorOcean also marks an ambitious change for the nautical museum, which started life 25 years ago in a small, wooden building filled with maritime artifacts and histories of local sailors. And not everyone is happy with turning the museum into an interactive amusement and education center.

"It has nothing to do with the history of Newport Beach," said Louise Fundenberg, who donated a cotton sail from her Snowbird — a class of boat popular in the harbor for many years — to the museum in the 1980s. Now she plans to cancel her museum membership.

Others, though, see it as a needed next step for the museum and progress for an area of old Balboa that some believe has become scruffy with age.

"You have to move with the time, and it includes moving beyond some of the [See Balboa, AA4]

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## Lohan arrives early this time

Actress' community service duties at the morgue include cleaning toilets. AA3

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Item No. D - Public Comments

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DEVELOPMENT  
CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Please  
preserve the  
Fun Zone!

If anything,  
the vintage look  
and rides should  
be supported  
and restored.  
This new building  
makes it look  
like Long Beach!